



## **B – Balancing and Centering the Body**

This practice begins by exploring how balance can reconnect us with the present moment, such as with movements that carefully challenge one’s sense of balance, followed by a return to stability and steadiness. This activity also helps the client become aware of their center using posture and movement of the spine. The artmaking directive invites the client to represent their center as a symbol, color, image, or word so it becomes a concrete place to return to in their body. The client’s visual representation of their center also acts as a reminder of this somatic resource.

### **Script for B**

**Introduction:** *We will now explore the fifth letter of the COME BACK tool, “B”: Balancing and Centering the Body.” Have some paper and art materials ready. Check in: Where are you at now on your scale of presence?*

**Psychoeducation:** *Testing your balance can increase your awareness of your body in the present moment. When you carefully and gently challenge your balance, such as by shifting your weight onto one leg, you naturally have to reconnect to your body in order to steady yourself so you don’t topple over - this is a little brain trick to quickly bring you back into the present!*

*This practice can also help you begin to shift your focus from outward to inward - so you can feel your body in the here-and-now and reconnect with your center. We often focus our attention outward, scanning the environment so we know we’re okay and that there are no dangers around. This is really helpful, but if all of our attention is focused on the external environment, then we can lose touch with what is happening on the inside, in our internal world.*

*You may like to begin this practice by sitting or standing, whichever feels most comfortable to you. You can adapt any of the movements to your body and whatever feels beneficial to you in the moment.*

### **Shifting pressure:**

- **Side-to-side:** *When you’re ready, you may begin to shift your weight from one side to the other. If you’re standing, you may like to shift your weight from one foot to the other foot, or if you’re sitting, shifting your weight side-to-side on your sit bones. Your movements can be big or small, just moving at your own pace. [Therapist demonstrates and participates in the movement activities throughout the script.]*

- **Pressure:** *As you shift your weight, you may begin to notice a sense of pressure where your body makes contact with the surface underneath you, such as with the floor or the chair. If you'd like, you could experiment with that pressure, perhaps increasing it by pushing your weight down into the ground or onto the chair as you move from side-to-side, noticing any sensations in the muscles of your feet, or the muscles around your sit bones. Maybe even the sensation of being supported and held by that surface.*
- **Front-to-back:** *Now you could try shifting your weight forward and back, perhaps moving your weight into your toes, then back onto your heels, or if you're sitting, to the front and back of your sit bones. Just shifting forward and backwards, at your own pace, noticing the sense of pressure as you move.*
- **Circles:** *Now, you may like to try combining these movements by moving back and forth, front and back, or even by making circular motions, moving in small or big circles as you shift your weight around on your feet or your sit-bones. The range and pace of your movements, how big or how small, how fast or how slow, is completely up to you.*

**Lifting and lowering:** *You may like to try standing to challenge your balance a little more, or you can stay seated, that's up to you. When you're ready, try lifting one foot off the ground, as much or as little as you like, perhaps pausing here to challenge your balance, and then lowering it back down again. Notice yourself coming back to a place of balance and stability in your body, fully supported by the surface under you. When you're ready, try the same movement with your other foot, lifting it up off the floor, pausing for a moment to challenge your balance, and then lowering it back down again at your own pace.*

*You may like to stay with this movement, or you may like to challenge your balance even more by steadying your weight on one leg, and experimenting with moving your other foot a little higher, perhaps out in front of you, out to the side, or behind you, then bringing it back down again in your own time. [Therapist demonstrates these options and continues to engage in the movement activities.] Feel free to continue with this lifting and lowering movement on the other side, challenging your balance as much or as little as you like, always coming back to a place of balance and stability.*

**Rounding the spine:** *For this next activity, I recommend coming into a seated position if that's comfortable for you (you can also do this standing) and when you're ready, begin to bring your awareness to your spine, maybe even moving your spine forwards and backwards or side-to-side, noticing how solid yet flexible your spine is.*

*You may like to experiment with rounding your spine forwards and backwards. Begin by brining your hands to your knees, then press into your knees to help round your spine backwards. You can even tuck your chin into your chest, rounding your spine towards the back of the room. [Therapist demonstrates this option and continues to engage in the movement activities.] At your own pace, you may like to bend your spine forward. You can pull into your knees with your hands to help uncurl and bend your spine toward the front of the room, maybe even extending your chin up toward the ceiling. Then, when you're ready, rounding your spine backwards again, tucking your chin in toward your chest. You can experiment with rounding and curving your spine forwards and backwards, at your own pace. How big or how small your movements are is completely up to you. You may even like to pair this movement with your breath: breathing out as you round your spine backwards, breathing in as you bend your spine forward, reaching your chin upwards.*

*You may like to stay with this forwards and backwards movement, or you can experiment with moving side-to-side, or even making circles, perhaps pressing your hands into your knees to help move your spine in whichever way feels most beneficial to you right now.*

**Settling in the center:** *And when you're ready, see if you can make your movements smaller and smaller, and a little smaller, until the movement becomes so small it is like you are hardly moving [therapist demonstrates this], and you come to a place that feels settled, that feels like your center. Allow yourself to explore this settled place for a moment, noticing that this is your center. Maybe even placing a hand there, where you notice your center in your body.*

**Art activity for centering:** *On a piece of paper, use the art materials to represent your center in any way you like - perhaps with symbols, color, shapes, lines, or words. There is no right or wrong way. This is just for you to remember this sense of centeredness in your body. [Therapist leaves time for the client to complete their image.]*

**Applying the skill:** *These activities can help you find your center and your balance whenever you need to. Use your artwork as a reminder of your center, that it is always there, and you can come back to it whenever you'd like.*

**Scale of presence reassessment:** *Where are you at now on your Scale of Presence? Do you notice any shifts? What was helpful for you about this activity? Was there anything that wasn't helpful?*

Script from *EMDR and Creative Arts Therapies* (Davis et al, 2022)  
Inviting the Body, Movement, and the Creative Arts into Telehealth:  
A Culturally Responsive Model for Online EMDR.

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